

A Korean Missionary Sees China.

LOIS HAWKS SWINEHART.

The lace industry in Korea had been well established, but after three years new patterns were needed sorely. A friend of the Northern Presbyterian Mission wrote me that she had some very superior ones, but that I should have to come to Yih sien to learn how to make them, and to study threads, etc. I determined to make this long trip but I did not tell the Captain so for a number of reasons.

It began in this way. The Captain had been ordered by the mission physicians to go to Peking for a long period of rest, and I went with him. Seven days we spent in that marvelous old city, four of them for me were taken up in a hospital experience in the Rockefeller Hospital, an institution that is one of the wonders of the world. One morning I faced the Captain. "The time has come," I said to him, "to talk of many things. I know you will storm, but I have decided that I am going down to mid-China." Tiny quakes thrilled

down my spine and uncomfortable misgivings settled in my knees, as I realized that I should have to explain to my huge husband that Yih sien was miles and miles south of where it had seemed to be on the map that I had consulted before leaving Korea. It had looked to be somewhere in Shantung, about three inches south of Tientsin, but maps are deceitful things, and after having spent twenty-four hours going from Mukden, Manchuria, to Peking, I had begun to realize something of the vast distances of the Celestial Empire.

He glared at the time-table, then looked severely at me through his celluloid rims. "Do you know that Yih sien is as far from Peking in time as New York is from Chicago? I can't go with you, and you are not going alone down into mid-China. That country is overrun with bandits, and I'm not taking any chances."

The argument was all onesided, and I turned and sat down upon a seat in that waiting-room of Cook's Tourist Bureau to gather my scattered wits. I was perfectly certain that I was going to Yih sien, but the way looked a bit obscure at that moment. Suddenly I thought of a new tack.

"There was a perfectly charming woman in the hospital—a member of our mission in Hsuehchowfu, and she is going home to-morrow morning, leaving from Tientsin where she is now staying. Yih sien is only a few hours from Hsuehchowfu, and I can join her in Tientsin, go home with her, and she can teach me to pronounce Yih sien on the way down, then I am sure with the aid of a time-table I can find my way there."

The huge one growled a bit, and turned to consult with the fair-haired Cook's agent. After minutes of suspense, the ultimatum was delivered.

"You may make this wild trip upon these conditions only. You are to join that friend in Tientsin, and go with her to Hsuehchowfu. Then upon your return, some man from that station must put you upon the train for Lencheng, and from there you will be personally conducted to Tsauchaung, where you change cars for Yih sien. I shall wire explicit instructions to your friend in this place, for it is no joke that you are going directly into the bandit country. You will be more than helpless without a word of the language."

The strain was lifted, I wanted to hug the Captain and the nice fair-haired agent on the spot. This trip would mean new and better lace patterns for my poor women and my school girls, and oh joy, it might mean a three-fold extension of the lace industry in Korea.

Bandits had no terrors for me that morning.

Very firmly I was told to stay in that sleeping car compartment until Tientsin was reached, and then I was to be taken in charge by the Chinese speaking missionary. I promised anything, waved a happy goodbye to the only man on that railway platform in Peking, and vowed I'd stay by the schedule. He agreed to meet me in Tientsin exactly one week from that day.

That T. & P. (Tientsin & Pukow) railway compartment car contained besides myself and suit case, one Chinese grandmother, her daughter-in-law, three daughters, and several of their children. Bags, boxes, and straw baskets were packed between, around, under and over us, to prevent friction, and serve as a barricade, in case of a flying wedge by bandits. It was much like traveling parcels post!

Thus comfortably stowed away we jogged along until Tientsin was reached. At this station no American woman boarded the train, because there was no American woman there.

I was headed for east central China alone, and without the language. Sight seeing was impracticable because of the wedged in baggage, and we were packed in so tight that I could not get out to go to the dining car, and probably should have starved to death if the kind hearted Chinese women had not handed me out bon bons in the shape of candied and varnished crab-apples, dried persimmons, and withered dates.

Night settled down and a slant eyed Chinese porter unpacked us one at a time, and made up the berths, then stuffed us in among the bags and boxes and baskets once more. All of this was accomplished with a tremendous amount of useless conversation, jangling, and wasted language. I couldn't speak a word, and couldn't understand a word of what they were saying. That dear, little old Chinese grandmother curled up in her berth, clothes, cap and all on, and went to sleep. The others smoked cigarettes until the lights went out, then subsided for the night.

That precious schedule and my punched ticket were all I had to guide me upon that pathless sea, and I hugged them to me tight. I wanted to cry, for I was lonesome and cold, and miserable, and could not understand why that lovely American missionary had missed the train. The long night dragged. The stations were not far apart, but the queer noises, and cries, and the wails of children and beggars struck coldly into my heart. But I knew I was going to learn how to make better lace, and further--the invisible Friend was with me, and that was quite enough. Toward morning I fell asleep, and was startled to hear my name called from the vestibule. I sprang up, and there was a great good missionary in the doorway, reaching for my suit case, and giving me a hearty welcome to Hsuchowfu. It was Dr. McFadyn. And the angel Gabriel will never look any better to me than he did that chill morning in that strange Chinese sleeper.

I was a bit dazed, and my hat was at an unfashionable angle when I was rushed to the platform to meet in the gray dawn two magnificently good looking American men,

traveling from Nanking to a meeting of Presbytery held in some unpronounceable heathen city of that district. It was humiliating, but not as discomfiting, perhaps, as a bandit raid would have been.

As the train pulled out I fancied I could hear the sigh of relief that filled that compartment, as my fellow travelers bulged over into the space I had been squeezed into.

It took sometime for me to resume my natural shape. An elastic anatomy is an asset in the Orient.

Dr. McFadyn had ordered rickshaws, and without waiting for any formalities we started for the mission compound. The age old streets of Hsuchowfu were paved with huge blocks of stone along in the middle ages, and no one has given them any attention since. Millions of sandaled feet, thousands of wheelbarrows, carts, donkeys, ponies, bulls and rickshaws have plodded over the rough uneven edges, until they are worn to the shape of a river bed, and are infinitely harder to travel over than a log yard, or a corduroy road.

Hsuchowfu is one of the oldest cities of

China, and that is about all it has to advertise. As we bumped along over the cobblestones, bruising our elbows black, we passed a high wall bristling at the top with broken glass set in cement. "That's the stronghold of Chang Hsuen—his castle" shouted Dr. McFadyn from his rickshaw. He pronounced this name exactly like "John Schwin," and it was some time before I learned that this was the name of a famous bandit chief, who took the side of the deposed Emperor, and led his forces against the republic. Much of the Chinese language isn't pronounced as it is spelled.

Human life was astir in those early hours. Water carriers with balanced oil tins at the end of long poles were pushing a way among donkey drivers, cabbage and lettuce peddlars, and cloth merchants. With a bump and a flourish we drew up to the gate of the mission compound. The rickshaw coolies set up a yell, and the great gate in the stone wall flew open. Ah, a bit of America met our eyes. To the right was a home, frankly modeled after those we were familiar with in God's country. Mrs. McFadyn and the little American McFadyns gave me a hearty welcome, and

I entered that home with a "Thank God for the men and women who put this haven here in the midst of this foreign bedlam." Nothing ever tasted so good as the breakfast that morning. The coffee was ambrosia, and the biscuits light as down.

After a week in China, visiting temples, palaces, shops—treading malodorous alleyways, jostling among coolies, merchants, fishermen, and dodging the high power cars of the nobility, it was like treading the streets of the New Jerusalem to walk among the schools and chapels, hospitals and homes of that quiet, orderly compound, set in the midst of the activities of that foul city.

Sixty Chinese girls in trousers and padded coats were being drilled in calisthenics as we entered the orderly grounds. They were a robust, healthy set, but naturally this Korean missionary said deep down in her heart, "Our girls of Korea are very much prettier, and the national costume far more graceful."

The old stone buildings are inadequate to the purposes of the school, and I longed for the power to picture the needs of that school and the consecrated American girl

who is giving her life to this work, in words that would burn into the heart of some man at home who is studying the advantages of a higher priced automobile he is planning to buy with money God Almighty entrusted to him.

The wind from the vast plains of North China was blowing a gale that day, and germ-laden dirt swirled in clouds and eddies through the streets and alleyways of the city, depositing a gray layer of sand upon everything in sight. Tables, chairs and beds were covered with it, and the grit of it touched our teeth.

I turned to that pretty American girl at my side. Her eyes were shining with pride as she reviewed her Chinese school.

“Dear, your hair was a lovely mop in America, wavy and shiny. It is not so in this dry wind-blown sandy land. The cost of this work has been much to you in many ways.” She gave me a smile, and pointed to her girls; “They are worth any price. If old China throws dust at me, and straightens the waves in my hair, I laugh in her face and throw back at her my regiment of fine Christian girls, my pride, my glory.”

"How do you keep warm in winter?" I asked, hardly able to keep back the tears. I had been looking at the pitifully inadequate means of heating the rooms of the old building.

"Oh I don't. I just put on two sweaters, and fold my arms tight about me and run around to keep up the circulation."

There are martyrs and martyrs in the service of Christ yet," I said.

After her long hours in the school-room this hard pressed girl principal must take her recreation hours for industrial work. A dozen girls with cross-stitch patterns in all stages of incompleteness helplessly crowded about her. With the love and patience of a winged angel she spent that precious hour in showing them where to place the colors, and in explaining for the twentieth time that peacocks do not look well upon luncheon sets, upside down. That school needs an assistant principal to back up that brave girl.

The next institution visited was Dr. Grier's hospital for women and children. We walked down the pavement talking about roses, and sweetpeas, and snapdragons and butterflies--

and in a moment, as a door flew open before us, we were in the midst of a clinic—the red, raw flesh of a hole, eaten in the face of a child by a repulsive disease, brought me up with a horrible shock.

The sweet face of Dr. Grier bent over this case in tenderness and sympathy. I wanted to cry out loud, as she turned to me with, “He’s better, a lot, this morning. I’m going to save him to a life of usefulness and decency. He is the only son of that poor mother, and he would have been a loathsome beggar but for this treatment. Don’t you want to make the rounds of my hospital with me?”

No, I didn’t, for suffering that I cannot help distresses me and my own hospital experience was a bit near in the background. The pain of others only opened up uselessly the memory of recent agonies. I wanted only to look at her, and to do this, I did make the rounds of her hospital that morning. Twenty-nine years of unselfish labor in that hospital for the love of Christ, and China! and she had only regrets that her work had not been more efficient. This missionary had been left with the care of three children too, when her hus-

band had been called to the Heavenly Home. She was a heroine in my eyes that morning.

"And greater works shall ye do, because I go unto my Father."

For a little recreation and to get away from her work the doctor asked me to go with her to the home of a Chinese friend of hers. We slipped from the compound enclosure into the street, and were soon wedged in between donkeys, rickshaws, cows, coolies, padded babies, peanut sellers, and water carriers. Down a side street where the alleyways were reeking with filth, and where the soil of the city and its nauseating garbage stood in uncovered cans, by the side of the narrow road; we threaded our way to a home set within a tiny enclosure. The fence was built of corn stalks and not a flower, nor a bit of green grass grew within that yard. Two donkeys disputed our progress to the house.

As we entered the low door, we were confronted by a stage setting. Upon a low wooden pallet lay a huge Chinaman, whose features were those of a bandit of the fiercest type. Thick eyebrows bristled sharply over bulging black eyes. A flat nose with enlarged no-

strils that might have breathed fire, had his picture been painted by a native artist, curved just above a tapering moustache that drooped defiantly over a sensual mouth. I started with involuntary fear, for in an instant I felt that he would arise from that cot, brandishing sabers and spears wickedly, and perhaps would mount a black steed and ride shrieking through that door. At first glance he looked the part, then I searched his features more closely. Something there was in the depths of the great black eyes, in the thick lips quivering with emotion, in the great unwashed fat hands clasping convulsively, that held me breathless. A mist, a halo, a glory had settled about the old warrior, and I was conscious of a divinity in that low room. That gracious American woman slipped to his side, and drew his head into the hollow of her arm. His eyes were burning coals of deep intelligence and feeling.

“He was once a member of the fiercest clan in Shantung, a bandit and warrior whose crimes were the terror of this whole district, but Jesus Christ walks with him now, and he is a child once more. Those books up on that

shelf above me are tracts and Bibles that he loves to read and pass on to his countrymen. Last week he had a stroke of paralysis, and he lies here like a helpless baby. Not once has an impatient word escaped him nor an oath. She turned to him to put a drink of water to his lips, and then said, "I love him like a brother." As I looked at the two faces there in the dim shadow—the same divinity shown from the light in their eyes, and a spirit, powerful, calm and awful seemed to say, "But as touching brotherly love—ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."

In the hospital conducted by Dr. and Mrs. McFadyn a direct evangelistic work was in progress as we entered the room where the convalescents were gathered. Fascinating Bible stories were being told to the patients, and one wounded soldier in particular attracted my attention. He had received a gun shot wound in the head while skirmishing around in southern China in guerilla fighting that the papers call war, and immediately left the ranks and started for home. He was through with militarism and discipline forever. Like a great animal, suffering, patient, affectionate

and teachable he lay there upon the cot. His eyes followed the big doctor with wonder and trust, and that missionary laid his cool hand upon the soldier's head, just as the Master would have done two thousand years ago.

The principal of the boys' school at that time was recovering from a long illness, but his work was being carried on by the other members of the station and native teachers. The boys of that school were a husky fine lot, and it was good to know that their education was founded upon a knowledge of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

It was very cold the morning I started for for Yih sien, and second-class travel in China is worse than anything America has to offer, unless it be a trip through the slums of New York. The car was unheated, the windows were scummed with grime. A livery stable would have had a cleaner floor.

A tremendous commotion arose as my train stood waiting to pull out behind time. A down town train had pulled into the station and before the hundreds of passengers could transfer themselves and their wives, and their sons and their daughters, and their man ser-

vants and their bird cages and their bed rolls from the vestibule of the car down the narrow steps to the station platform, a reverse movement of natives and their possessions, from the platform to the train, had set in, and for ten minutes there was a shrieking mass of humanity in a deadlock. Slowly the attacking crowd yielded, and by a well executed center rush the car was filled with the ragged survivors, and the brakeman pulled the wounded away from the car wheels as the train pulled out. This process was repeated at every station from every third-class car.

Two hours from Hsuchowfu in the distance we sighted the hill that marks the final resting place of Confucius—a sacred spot to millions of Chinese.

We were passing through a country of sweeping plains flanked by a straggling line of bare mountains. The fields had yielded their crops of kaffir corn and wheat, and were now being scratched and torn and combed by children and men, for every root and stalk and stick that had been left after the harvest. This is the pitiful fuel of the common people. The soil of China is overworked, truly. The ground fairly cries out for a bit of rest.

At Lencheng I looked about for the man who was to escort me to Yihsien. No one appeared, and I wanted to jump for joy, for now I was free to wander at will and study the Chinese as they are.

A long line of freight cars stood at the siding, and coolies were loading them with wheat sacked up in bags made of straw matting.

Hundreds of little children and old women, gaunt and thin, were sweeping up every grain that had fallen to the ground. In a flash I realized that this was the district of the famine sufferers, and that these children and old women were hungry.

Looking closely I saw that some of the little fingers that were busy with brooms, now and then thrust a tiny hole into a grain sack, and scant gleanings grew greater in the dust-pans. The loading coolies looked the other way when this happened, and as no one is responsible for another's property in that land, the shipper has no redress.

Beyond a wooden paling at the entrance to the station grounds, a long line of food vendors shouted their wares. An old man with

a one-toothed grin, offered to sell me a basket of ducks, fried whole. His manner was ingratiating, but those ducks had been given a coat of Valspar, and I do not like varnish in my teeth! I motioned that I'd rather chance it with the famine'sufferers.

A puffy, over-important little train stood at the branch line near, and I boarded the only passenger car—one with benches down the sides. I was traveling third class now, and had reached the level of the people. I once heard a lecturer in America advise missionaries to get close to the natives. I wanted him to see me now.

A long countryman who had never taken a bath in his life, and had been born, apparently in the suit he was wearing, sat upon my left, and to my right was the darlingest little dressed up doll I had ever seen. She was about nineteen years of age, wore trousers of blue satin and a pink satin waist that buttoned down the side. The artificial pink in her cheeks exactly matched the pink of her waist. Her eyes were brilliant black glass, shiny only on the surface. A fascinating black satin cap covered her shapely head in exact con-

tour, curved over her cheeks, and was cut off at the neck with the same effect that American girls achieve by drawing the hair over the ears.

Her feet were bound and misshapen. I am sure they were not flesh and bone. They looked like wooden shoe-trees thrust into the stiff little black satin slippers, 3 in. long, that covered them. An old dowager with shoe button eyes and a suede complexion was her chaperone.

With a start I realized that this doll and the old woman were under special escort, for opposite them sat two leather-brown Chinamen, armed with long pistols, knives and guns. Cartridge belts like life preservers were bound about their chests. Their faces were grim and fierce, and their finger nails long and clawed.

The bandit situation arose acute—and in the terror of the moment lace patterns seemed a foolish quest, and I wished I had never left my husband alone in Peking—at least we could have died together.

The presence of the doll was reassuring, however, for she sat motionless and placid and unafraid of her bristling body-guard. I

shifted to windward of the countryman to escape the odors of garlic and hair oil, and an unwashed human body.

These missionaries in the interior districts of China never go any place that they do not have to travel in the manner I was then traveling. They bear much for the hope of the coming of the Kingdom, I thought.

Tsauchaoung was reached at three o'clock, —no it isn't an eating station, though it sounds like it. Here I was met by an English speaking Chinese student sent from Yih sien by Mrs. Winter. He had missed the train to Len-cheng. He had with him a folding-chair, steamer rugs and pillows, and in a short time these were spread upon a flat car attached to another third-class horror. I learned right there the value of the services of a boy in China. The remainder of that journey was made in the open air, and ah, it was sweet, fresh and clear.

Yih sien is another age-old city. Its wall and moat and architecture date back probably to an early Confucian era. It has no civic club nor Rotary Club, and is very much behind the times. It is a city of 60,000 people

and only has one Ford, and it has flat tires most of the time. The streets are open sewers, and are all cut up by the heavy two-wheeled ox and donkey carts.

The mission compound with its enclosing wall was like the first glimpse of the blessed homeland through the round port-hole of a liner to the sea weary traveler—and those American men and women, and the babies, were the best looking things in the Orient!

A night's rest upon a clean springy bed fitted me for the day of work among the industrial schools. I sprang upon the Chinese girls at work in the lace department, and wanted to hug every one of them, they looked so like my own Korean girls, and their work was so beautiful. Oh, if American purchasers of lace could only see the little brown fingers fly among the bobbins, and know that every time one thread crosses another a little hand thrusts a pin into the pattern below, I'm sure hand-made lace would have a sentimental value far above that of its market price. The new patterns were lovely and Mrs. Winter and I talked shop for hours and hours. We put our heads together and rubbed our noses

flat over the drawings of some exclusive designs, and next year we plan to startle America with a lace distinctive and *different*.

As this visit in the interests of the industrial work came to a close, I was put in care of a trusted servant and sent back over that third-class road. Of course you will understand that there was no other kind of travel offered by the management of that road.

At Lencheng I was to board the up country express for Tientsin, where I had crossed my heart that I would meet the Captain the next day at three o'clock. My ticket and berth check were in my purse, and I was feeling quite the experienced and seasoned traveler. The express thundered down the right of way and I boarded the car marked upon my check. It was eleven o'clock at night. The car was already loaded to capacity with a promiscuous crowd of humanity, and my advent seemed an intrusion. There was no welcoming porter—not even a Pullman conductor, and the train conductor gave me a stony stare, and punched my ticket. I looked about me for signs of sleeping accommodation. Half of the car was built up with berths, and hopefully I made

my way along the overcrowded day coach benches, each occupied by a stretched-out human figure, to the door of the sleeping compartments.

Posted in rare English over one of the openings was my name—and rapturously I slid back the door. The two berths inside were already completely and sufficiently occupied by two overweight Chinamen snoring openly. I could not speak to them in a language that they would understand, and at a glance I saw that I could not throw either of them out of my berth. I crumpled down upon the only seat vacant in that dim, wretchedly stuffy car, and may be you don't think I put up some good old hard prayers. No porter ever came into that car, and for fifteen interminable hours I sat up in that coach, and tried to deny the "ego" in an interest in the life about me; the scenery was good to look at too, when the day arose.

Chinese soldiers were my fellow travelers. China's standing army doesn't stand much; it's riding upon free passes most of the time. Hours and hours and hours one big soldier in a wadded suit of gray cotton (the national

uniform) and I faced each other. I knew he wanted to talk to me, but the barrier of language stood between us. I gave him a tract printed in Chinese. At once his face lighted up with a smile, and he leaned over to me, and pointing to himself said the word "Yesu." I shall never forget the thrill of that word, uttered amid those surroundings. I have always wondered if he were a Christian. Perhaps he is one of the Christian General Feng's men. God bless him and hold him true, if he is.

Three o'clock it was when the train reached Tientsin. A great husky American, the best sight in the Orient, greeted me as I reached the pure outside air once more.

The little journey was over, and that night I left upon the Mukden express for Korea.





SHE'S 101 AND IT'S HER BIRTHDAY

... Mrs. Lois Swinehart still celebrating.
Sept. 18, 1970

STAFF PHOTO



Charles and Marguerite Sauer
on their 50th wedding
August 17, 1970



Mrs. Avison Mrs. Reynolds Mrs. Hubert
Mrs. Bunker

What year?

